



# CCM 2014 Testimony

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## ***PUBLIC SAFETY & SECURITY COMMITTEE***

March 11, 2014

The Connecticut Conference of Municipalities (CCM) is Connecticut's statewide association of towns and cities and the voice of local government - your partners in governing Connecticut. Our members represent over 92% of Connecticut's population. We appreciate the opportunity to testify on bills of interest to towns and cities.

### **HB 5531 – “An Act Concerning Mutual Consolidation of Dispatch Facilities”**

### **SB 426 – “An Act Suspending and Evaluating the Consolidation of Dispatch Centers within the Division of State Police”**

CCM supports both HB 5531 and SB 426 as a reasonable means to ensure public safety is properly maintained.

HB 5531 would provide municipalities with the mechanism to effectively consolidate their dispatch functions and facilities by allowing two or more municipalities the ability to create a dispatch authority.

There are constraints currently in place that prevent towns and cities to effectively consolidate these public safety dispatch centers. HB 5531 would allow these communities to establish a dispatch authority, a similar mechanism that allows towns and cities to consolidate their public health functions into health districts. The intention of the proposal is to alleviate current constraints relating to the development of consolidated dispatch centers, such as personnel contracts, ownership of the project and facility along with the proper appropriation of funds between each of the municipalities served by the new dispatch facility.

Regionalization occurs on a daily basis among many facets of local government and should be encouraged. Local officials rely on a certain degree of flexibility to ensure the safety of their own communities, and address the concerns of their citizens. Therefore, local officials should continue to be afforded the discretion to determine which dispatch functions work best for their communities.

SB 426 would suspend the current State Police dispatch consolidation efforts and require the evaluation of any future consolidation. Local officials, particularly those served by Resident State Troopers, have concerns with current dispatch consolidation. There have been instances of delays in dispatching State Police to an incident, as well State Troop barracks being routinely closed. Further study of this issue will ensure a balance is met between potential budgetary savings and ensuring public safety is properly maintained.

CCM asks the Committee to favorably report both HB 5531 and SB 426.

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If you have any questions, please contact Mike Muszynski, Senior Legislative Associate of CCM at [mmuszynski@ccm-ct.org](mailto:mmuszynski@ccm-ct.org) or (203) 500-7556.